UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 7
901 NORTH 5TH STREET
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

16 MAR 2009

Mr. James Rost
Director, Office of Location & Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Interstate 74 Quad Cities Corridor Study Scott County, Iowa and Rock Island County, Illinois

Regions 5 and 7 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Interstate 74 Quad Cities Corridor Study. This FEIS documents the analysis and coordination undertaken for the replacement of the I-74 Bridge and improvements to the Interstate Corridor in Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa and Moline, Illinois. Our review is provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. 4231, Council on Environmental Quality regulations 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The FEIS was assigned the CEQ number 20090019.

Our review of the December 2003 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project resulted in a rating of Environmental Concerns-2 (Insufficient Information). In EPA's official correspondence we offered comments pertaining to the Existing Bridge Disposition, Natural Areas, Water Quality Impacts, Business Relocations and Wetlands. EPA appreciates the additional investigation and analysis given to these issues.

Pertaining to this FEIS, EPA notes a commitment in Section 4.3.9.1 to provide a 10 foot clearance zone around bridge piers to protect mussels during construction. EPA recommends that adequate protection is likewise provided in demolition operations. Also, the FEIS describes cleaning and maintenance measures that will be employed to reduce the potential for contaminants to be carried into the Mississippi River via runoff water. While these efforts may result in positive benefit, the ultimate goal of protecting vulnerable mussel colonies must be kept in focus. EPA urges project designers to continually review the status of ongoing mussel monitoring, and to evaluate incorporation of centrifugal particle separators, filtration drains, and/or other pollution-control mechanisms as necessary. We further recommend placing the runoff discharge points from the bridge piers where they will minimize impacts to the mussel beds.